



Act 1240 Waiver Extension Request

District:	Brinkley School District
LEA Number:	4801000
Superintendent:	Dr. Brenda Poole
Email:	bpoole@btigers.org
Contact for Waiver:	Brenda Poole
Contact Email:	bpoole@btigers.org
Contact Phone:	870-734-5105
Date Received by DESE:	

The following documents must be submitted with the waiver request:

1. School Board Resolution approving the waiver request
2. Evidence of stakeholder involvement, including teachers and student families

Waiver Extension Request #1

Topic:	Teacher Licensure
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	A.C.A. § 6-17-309 A.C.A. § 6-17-401 A.C.A. § 6-17-418 A.C.A. § 6-17-902 A.C.A. § 6-17-908 A.C.A. § 6-17-919 A.C.A. § 6-15-1004 Standard 4-D.1 DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity – Sections 7.09.1, 7.09.2, and 7.10 DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure –Section 7.00 only
Duration Requested:	2023-2024 school year through 2025-26 (3 years)
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Virtual Arkansas; KIPP Delta
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To	C.B. Partee K-6; Brinkley High School 7-12
PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase Equitable Access to Effective Teachers

- 1. Provide a DETAILED RATIONALE explaining how the waiver will enhance student learning opportunities, promote innovation or increase equitable access to effective teachers. Include information about the problem or obstacle, if any, the waiver will help the district overcome.**

Employing qualified teachers continues to be the goal and desire of the Brinkley School District. Our first effort is to hire traditionally certified teachers. Unfortunately, barriers such as base salary, availability of community housing, social and recreational opportunities, high economic disparities, stigma placed on schools by public ratings, and access to certified teachers in the Delta prevent us from reaching this goal. Therefore, ACT 1240 waivers allow us to employ committed, qualified individuals with a degree and a minimum of 198 hours in the subject areas they are hired while they work on completing their certification. The waivers will help us eliminate the shortage of licensed teachers in critical areas now and in the future.

New teachers have been assigned Marigold mentors that are effective educators. Additionally, we have a provided additional content area support to meet with new teachers weekly as part of our retention of teachers' efforts. We also use the book *180 Days of Self-Care for Busy Educators* to support work-life balance. Working in high-poverty schools and communities can be a challenging experience for a new teacher. Therefore, we wanted to provide wrap-around support for our novice teachers.

2. Provide a detailed explanation of how the services being waived will be provided for students.

Students will have a degreed person working towards licensure to support their academic needs. The waiver teachers are being mentored, receiving intensive training or schooling depending on their alternate path, are from the community or surrounding area, have content hours in the subject area they are teaching, and are committed to the students they serve; therefore, the students learning will not suffer as a result of being taught by a waiver teacher. Waiver teachers are held to the same expectation as traditionally certified teachers; the end goal is for them to become licensed teachers.

3. Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver.

I check in with the waiver teacher quarterly, and the support staff and mentors meet with them weekly. They attend the novice teacher training and Mr. Authur Willis, the Recruitment and Retention Facilitator at Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative, provides updates on teacher progress. Ms. Riley, the teacher center coordinator, has also gone over with the novice teachers tutoring available through DESE and given them access to tutoring through study.com. Teachers who have gone through the ArPep, formerly APPEL, program received guidance from those facilitators and Ms. Ann Crosser at the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our teachers are also coached and engaged in the PLC process and collaborative teaming. Any new learning acquired from professional development is monitored for implementation by the principals. Pre-COVID, I met once monthly with novice teachers. I used the National Board Professional Teaching Standards Five Core Propositions and Architecture of Accomplished Teaching to assist teachers in understanding TIER I instruction and what teachers should know and be able to do and what is under the surface of teaching. Deficit areas in one of the five core propositions are (Teachers are committed to students and their learning, teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students, teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning, teachers think systematically about their learning and learn from experience, and teachers are members of learning communities) and the architecture of accomplished teaching, will result in a weak core instructional program.

Currently, we have two paraprofessional participating the Reach University educator prep program and two interested for this upcoming year. We are committed to growing our own teachers.

4. Describe how the waiver has ensured success in the school or district over the period the waiver was in effect. PROVIDE DATA OR EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT YOUR ANSWER.

Over the last five years, we have been able to fill classroom vacancies using ACT 1240 waiver teachers. Of the ten original teachers hired under the waiver, four have gotten certified (40%), and only two of the certified are still in the district. Four of the ten have taken jobs closer to home, moved for more pay or marriage, or have left the profession. Four teachers remain in the district that have completed the APPEL program, but still, need to pass the content assessments. They are using the Praxis study materials provided by Ms. Kelsey Riley. All teachers have been provided opportunities to attend the DESE Praxis support sessions to bridge the gap from practice to practicum hopefully.

Because of the high staff turnover last year, we hired four new teachers on the waiver for the 22-23 school year. Currently, we have nine teachers on the waiver and two will not be returning for the upcoming school year. We will seek to employ certified teachers for those positions.

C.B. Partee Elementary has five waiver teachers; two teachers in grades K-6 that are in the MAT program and one traditionally trained that needs to pass the reading portion of the Praxis assessment. Two teachers have completed the APPEL program, but has only the fourth grade teacher has passed the social studies and science content area assessments; the PE teacher still needs to pass the physical education PRAXIS. This teacher will not be returning for the 23-24 school year.

Brinkley High School has four teachers that have either completed the APPEL program or are currently in an alternate program of study. They are working on passing the Praxis assessment. One waiver teacher will not be returning next year. We will search for a certified teacher to fill that position.

These teachers are vested in the students and community. Brinkley School District is committed to providing our students with highly trained teachers. We are seeing positive professional growth with our waiver teachers and are working with them to become licensed educators. Staff turnover mentioned earlier poses a problem for teacher retention. Therefore, we are committed to growing our own teachers and are providing opportunities for our paraprofessionals to receive tuition assistance to become teachers through the REACH program.

To further support new teachers, they have weekly meetings with their mentor and content specialist to mitigate the emotional overload and stress that causes teachers to leave the profession.

C.B. Partee Elementary ESSA Rating:

We are proud that these reports show us doing well on growth in science. The state's average growth in Science Achievement was 51.36, and C.B. Partee was 53.16. Even though C.B. Partee's school rating remained a D, an analysis of the data showed the School Index Score of 63.15 in 2019 to 58.44 in 2022, causing the School Rating to remain a D. This was a difference of 4.71 points. We know this is due to the impact of COVID-19. The school cannot lose more than 1.35 points in the overall ESSA School Index to maintain a D for 2023. If the school increases by 5.51 points, the school will achieve a C status. However, our goal is to gain at least 6.54 points to improve the overall ESSA School Index to rebound back to a C school.

Brinkley High School ESSA Rating:

Brinkley High went from having an ESSA School Index Score of 58.16 in 2019 to 51.92 in 2022, causing a decrease from a D in 2019 to an F in 2022 in the Public School Rating. This was a difference of 6.24 points. The school will need at least 1.03 points of increase in the ESSA School Index to rebound to a D for 2023. In 2021, the ESSA index was 56.59, which would have been rated as a D. The goal is to obtain a C. We received a higher score than the state in the computer science course credit, AP/IB/Concurrent Credit, on-time credits, and community service learning. We were very close to the state average in students having a 2.8 or Higher GPA and student engagement (attendance).

Even though we are not where we want to be, we understand our challenges and are working to address them.

*See attachment for teacher progress and comments

Waiver Extension Request #2

Topic:	Library Media Specialist
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	A.C.A. § 6-25-103 A.C.A. § 6-25-104 Standard 4.F.1
Duration Requested:	2023-2024 school year through 2025-26 (3 years)
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Virtual Arkansas; KIPP Delta
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To	C.B. Partee K-6; Brinkley High School 7-12
PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase Equitable Access to Effective Teachers

1. Provide a DETAILED RATIONALE explaining how the waiver will enhance student learning opportunities, promote innovation or increase equitable access to effective teachers. Include information about the problem or obstacle, if any, the waiver will help the district overcome.

We have not been able to hire a certified library media specialist. No one in the district is interested, and despite advertising the position, no one has applied. The library media specialist is needed to assist students with research for projects, help students locate resources for assignments, and how locate credible sources and cite them appropriately. The media specialist facilitates students' desire to stay informed on current events and learn new information.

Furthermore, having this waiver will help us continue to meet standards and have a librarian on both campuses.

2. Provide a detailed explanation of how the services being waived will be provided for students.

I believe that the library is the learning hub of the school. All students will continue to have access to the library and high-quality services. The K-12 librarian ensures that the library is open on both campuses and that the curriculum is taught. We have a paraprofessional that assists in the elementary library to ensure that the library is always available, which is essential to cultivating a love of reading and essential research and technology skills.

3. Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver.

At the superintendent's request, Cassandra Barnett, DESE Program Advisory for School Libraries, has provided support and monitoring as needed. Additionally, the school administrators monitor the implementation of the library standards. The K-12 library media specialist also monitors the paraprofessional assigned to the library. The superintendent will continue to connect the waiver teacher with classroom and practicum support for the Praxis assessment. Ms. Cassandra Barnett will

provide training to the staff supporting paraprofessionals so that principals can measure the effectiveness of instruction being provided to students.

4. Describe how the waiver has ensured success in the school or district over the period the waiver was in effect. PROVIDE DATA OR EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT YOUR ANSWER.

The library has been open and available to students before, during, and after school hours. It has been a place for students to conduct research, take AR quizzes, read for pleasure, and participate in the reading club. Students who need a quiet place to work also go to the library.

Since the waiver has been in place, we have assigned certified teachers in the district who volunteered to go back to school to obtain the library media certification.

Steps taken to employ a certified teacher:

- Ask teachers in the district if they are interested in going back to college and obtaining certification or a master's in library media specialist.
- Reaching out to teachers outside the district I serve through National Board support to apply for the position.
- Posted jobs on AAEA Job board, the district's website, and all social media platforms.
- Principals calling out and emailing potential candidates on the list provided by Andy Sullivan
- Attended a Job fair and contacted teachers about the library media specialist job.
- Great Rivers COOP Recruitment and Retention Specialist Kelsey Riley is also trying to assist us with our search.

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Plan developed with Cassandra Barnett, ADE Program Advisor for School Libraries.

Plan A –

Continue to search for a school librarian. The job is posted on the district's website. Dr. Poole has a list of possibilities for several job openings, and the schools' principals are calling each individual on the list to recruit. There is one person who is considering the position. Cassandra Barnett has agreed to reach out to the three certification programs at Arkansas Tech University and Southern Arkansas University for possible recruitment. She has also agreed to reach out through her distribution list of school librarians to identify those who might be willing to relocate or who can spread the word to classroom teachers who might be interested in becoming certified and relocating. The district is willing to help with tuition expenses for anyone willing to take the position and work on certification. If a person is hired to take the position, especially if they are not certified, Ms. Barnett will provide whatever support is needed.

Plan B –

There is currently a full-time paraprofessional working at each school in the libraries. The principals, the instructional facilitators, and the K-12 GT teacher support the paraprofessionals in purchasing materials and creating lesson plans for the K-6 students in the elementary school. Content teachers at the secondary school have taken on the responsibility of teaching students when they are doing research. If Dr. Poole cannot find someone to take the library position, then the principals, instructional facilitators, and the GT teacher will continue to provide that support. Cassandra Barnett, at Dr. Poole's request, will work with the instructional facilitators before school starts in the fall to create lesson plans based on the library media standards for students at the elementary school. Ms. Barnett has also offered to provide professional development on the essential library media standards to the secondary core content teachers in order to improve students' research process skills. If requested, she can meet periodically with the district support team to provide additional help.

RESOLUTION FOR LOCAL SUPPORT OF

ACT 1240 Waiver Extension Requests

Brinkley School District

WHEREAS the Brinkley Board of Directors has reviewed and fully supports the School District's need for the ACT 1240 Waivers;

and


WHEREAS the Brinkley Board of Directors understands that the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education will review and provide feedback to the District;

and

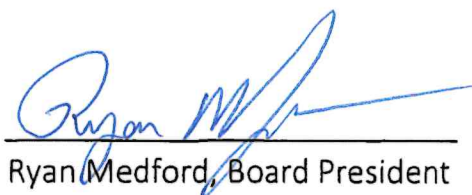
WHEREAS the Brinkley Board of Directors understands that final approval will be granted by the Arkansas State Board of Education.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Brinkley Board of Directors gives permission to the superintendent to act on behalf of the District in requesting an extension for the ACT 1240 Waivers and commits to dedicating local resources to ensure implementation of the waivers.

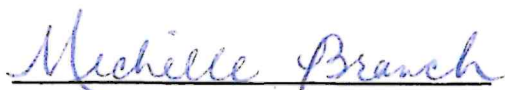
Signed:



Brenda Poole, Superintendent



Ryan Medford, Board President



Michelle Branch, Board Secretary

Approved @ February 21, 2023 Board Meeting

Brinkley School District ACT 1240 Licensure Waiver Extentsion Staff Input

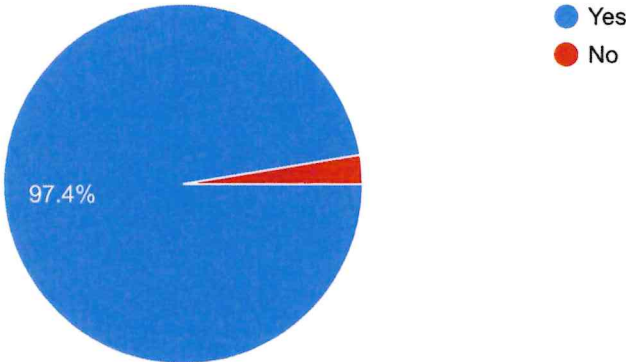
38 responses

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Do you think that the Brinkley School District should ask for an extension of the ACT 1240 Teacher Licensure Waiver? This waiver allows us the flexibility in hiring unlicensed individuals with a degree with so many hours of course work in the content area they would be employed. This includes flexibility in hiring a library media specialist as well. Once hired, the individual enrolls in an alternative pathway to become licensed.



38 responses



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Brinkley School District ACT 1240 Licensure Waiver Extentsion Community Input

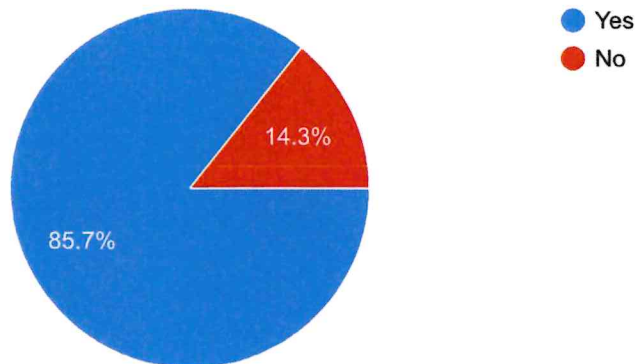
105 responses

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105 responses



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